

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 L-02 NSC-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02

NIC-01 EB-07 AID-05 SS-15 OMB-01 /079 W

----- 060894

R 221302Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8455

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 3905

E.O. 11652 XGDS-1, MARCH 1976

TAGS: PFOR, UR, LA

SUBJECT: SOVIET-LAOTIAN RELATIONS: AID AND VISITS

1. LAOTIAN AMBASSADOR LA NORINDR TOLD EMBOFF MARCH 19 THAT LAOTIAN ECONOMICS MINISTER SOTH PETHRASY WILL TRANSIT MOSCOW ON SUNDAY, MARCH 23 ENROUTE TO POLAND, AND WILL AGAIN TRANSIT MOSCOW ON MARCH 26 ENROUTE TO MONGOLIA. LA NORINDR SAID THAT HE WAS NOT INFORMED ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF SOTH'S TRIP BUT ASSUMED THAT IT WAS RELATED TO FURTHER AID TALKS. (HE WAS PERPLEXED ABOUT THE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENT SINCE HE KNEW OF NO FLIGHT ARRIVING IN MOSCOW FROM ASIA ON THE 23RD.) LA NORINDR SAID THAT SOTH HAD BEEN TREATED COLDLY BY THE SOVIETS ON HIS TRIP HERE LAST DECEMBER; NO ONE OF SIGNIFICANCE MET HIM AT THE AIRPORT, SAW HIM OFF OR EVEN RECEIVED HIM DURING HIS STAY. LA NORINDR SPECULATED THAT THIS MAY HAVE BEEN BECAUSE SOTH HAD "TALKED WITH THE CHINESE."

2. THE AID ACCORD WHICH WAS SIGNED DURING THAT VISIT WAS, ACCORDING TO LA NORINDR, SIMPLY A RENEWAL OF PREVIOUS PROJECTS PROPOSED BY THE SOVIETS, NOT A NEW COMMITMENT. A HOSPITAL AND  
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THREE BRIDGES ARE SCHEDULED TO BE BUILT, BUT OTHER ITEMS REMAIN

TO BE NEGOTIATED. THE SOVIETS HAVE SUGGESTED, RATHER SURPRISINGLY HE THOUGHT, THAT THE MATERIAL FOR THESE PROJECTS BE SHIPPED THROUGH BANGKOK RATHER THAN AS PREVIOUSLY THROUGH HAIPHONG. ONE PROBLEM WITH THIS AID IS THAT THE LAO GOVERNMENT IS SUPPOSED TO PAY FOR TRANSPORTATION FROM THE PORT TO THE PROJECT SITE. LA NORINDR THOUGHT THAT THE VALUE OF THE AID WAS REDUCED BY THIS CONDITION SINCE NEARLY ALL OF IT WOULD GO TO THE PATHET LAO ZONE. HE DID NOTE THAT IN ADDITION TO THIS PROJECT AID, MOSCOW WAS SENDING SOME URGENTLY-NEEDED FOOD AND OTHER ITEMS FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION AND WOULD PAY FOR TRANSPORTATION OF THESE ITEMS.

3. ON SOVIET VIEWS OF SOUVANNA'S PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, LA NORINDR CONFIRMED THAT THE SOVIETS EXPRESS STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE COALITION AND THE MEANS BY WHICH IT WAS BROUGHT INTO EXISTENCE. HE SAID THAT KAPITSA, DIRECTOR OF THE SOVIET MFA'S FIRST FAR EAST DIVISION, TOLD HIM IN FRONT OF SEVERAL OTHER AMBASSADORS IN NOVEMBER THAT THE SOVIETS WERE "ROYALISTS" IN LAOS, THAT THEY RESPECT AND ADMIRE THE KING AND APPROVE FULLY OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT. THE SOVIETS, SAID LA NORINDR NEVER TIRE OF WARNING HIM ABOUT THE CHINESE, IN PARTICULAR THEIR ROAD-BUILDING ACTIVITIES.

4. LA NORINDR SAID THAT HE HAD RECEIVED NO REPORTS AT ALL ABOUT FIRYUBIN'S RECENT VISIT TO LAOS AND WAS NOT EVEN SURE WHO FIRYUBIN HAD TALKED WITH. HE SAID THAT SINCE FOREIGN MINISTER PHONMI IS FROM THE PATHET LAO SIDE AND HE HIMSELF IS NOT, HE DOES NOT HEAR MUCH FROM VIENTIANE.

5. ON HIS RECENT APPOINTMENT AS CONCURRENT AMBASSADOR TO FINLAND (VIENTIANE A-015), LA NORINDR SAID THAT HE IS NOW ASSIGNED TO "ABOUT TEN" COUNTRIES, BUT THAT HE HAS RECEIVED NO ORDERS OR MONEY TO TRAVEL TO HELSINKI TO PRESENT HIS CREDENTIALS. HE SAID THAT HE EXPECTS TO LEAVE MOSCOW WITHIN A FEW MONTHS, THAT HE HAS ALREADY BEEN HERE FOUR YEARS, AND THAT IS LONG ENOUGH.  
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